

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) An apparatus for supporting reinforcement bars in a concrete structure, the apparatus comprising:
 - a base member having a lower surface and an opposing upper surface;
 - a plurality of ~~pairs of opposing~~ first leg members extending upward from the upper surface of the base member, each of the first leg members having a lower end connected to the base member and an upper end distally disposed from the lower end;
 - a plurality of cradles for holding a plurality of reinforcement bars, each cradle attached to the upper ends of at least one of the ~~a corresponding pair of the plurality of pairs of opposing~~ first leg members, each cradle ~~for receiving~~ aholding one of the plurality of reinforcement bars in a position substantially parallel to each of the other reinforcement bars held in each of the other cradles.
2. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of cradles comprises a pair of opposing sidewalls separated by a channel.
3. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the base member has a central opening disposed between the ~~opposing~~ first leg members.
4. (canceled)
5. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:
 - the base member having a first end and a second end;
 - a first pair of the ~~plurality of pairs of opposing~~ first leg members disposed adjacent the first end of the base member;
 - a second pair of the ~~plurality of pairs of opposing~~ first leg members disposed adjacent the second end of the base member;
 - a first cradle of the plurality of cradles, the first cradle attached to the upper ends of the first pair of ~~opposing~~ first leg members;
 - a second cradle of the plurality of cradles, the second cradle attached to the upper ends of the second pair of ~~opposing~~ first leg members;

- a second leg member extending upward from the upper surface of the first end of the base member, the second leg member having a lower end connected to the base member and an upper end connected to the first cradle; and
- a third leg member extending upward from the upper surface of the second end of the base member, the third leg member having a lower end connected to the base member and an upper end connected to the second cradle.
6. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 5 wherein the base member has a central opening disposed between the first leg members in the first pair of opposing first leg members, between the first leg members in the second pair of opposing first leg members, and between the second and third leg members.
7. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 5 wherein the lower ends of the ~~opposing~~ first leg members ~~within each of the plurality of~~ in the first and second pairs are spaced farther apart than are the upper ends of the ~~opposing~~ first leg members, and the lower ends of the second and third leg members are spaced farther apart than are the upper ends of the second and third leg members.
8. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising horizontal support members disposed between the cradles.
9. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising retaining members protruding inwardly from the opposing sidewalls to retain a reinforcement bar within the channel.
10. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the base member, first leg members, and cradles comprise a unitary structural element.
11. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the base member, first leg members, and cradles are formed from a continuous piece of thermoplastic material.
12. (currently amended) An apparatus for supporting reinforcement bars in a concrete structure, the apparatus comprising:
a base member having a lower surface and an opposing upper surface;

a plurality of ~~pairs of opposing~~ first leg members extending upward from the upper surface of the base member, each of the first leg members having a lower end connected to the base member and an upper end distally disposed from the lower end, ~~the lower ends of the opposing first leg members within each of the plurality of pairs spaced farther apart than are the upper ends;~~

a plurality of cradles for holding a plurality of reinforcement bars, each cradle attached to the upper ends of at least one of the ~~a corresponding pair of the plurality of pairs of opposing~~ first leg members, each cradle for holding one of the plurality of ~~receiving a~~ reinforcement bars in a position substantially parallel to each of the other reinforcement bars held in each of the other cradles, wherein each of the plurality of cradles comprises a pair of opposing sidewalls separated by a channel;

retaining members protruding inwardly from the opposing sidewalls of the cradles to retain a reinforcement bar within the channel;

horizontal support members disposed between the cradles;

the base member having a central opening disposed between the ~~opposing~~ first leg members;
and

the base member, first leg members, cradles, retaining members, and horizontal support members comprising a unitary structural element.

13. (new) An apparatus for supporting reinforcement bars in a concrete structure, the apparatus comprising:

a base member having a lower surface, an opposing upper surface, a first end and a second end;

a plurality of pairs of opposing first leg members extending upward from the upper surface of the base member, each of the first leg members having a lower end connected to the base member and an upper end distally disposed from the lower end;

a first pair of the plurality of pairs of opposing first leg members disposed adjacent the first end of the base member;

a second pair of the plurality of pairs of opposing first leg members disposed adjacent the second end of the base member;

- a plurality of cradles, each cradle attached to the upper ends of a corresponding pair of the plurality of pairs of opposing first leg members, each cradle for receiving a reinforcement bar;
 - a first cradle of the plurality of cradles, the first cradle attached to the upper ends of the first pair of opposing first leg members;
 - a second cradle of the plurality of cradles, the second cradle attached to the upper ends of the second pair of opposing first leg members;
 - a second leg member extending upward from the upper surface of the first end of the base member, the second leg member having a lower end connected to the base member and an upper end connected to the first cradle; and
 - a third leg member extending upward from the upper surface of the second end of the base member, the third leg member having a lower end connected to the base member and an upper end connected to the second cradle.
14. (new) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the base member has a central opening disposed between the first pair of opposing first leg members, between the second pair of opposing first leg members, and between the second and third leg members.
15. (new) The apparatus of claim 13 wherein the lower ends of the opposing first leg members within each of the plurality of pairs are spaced farther apart than are the upper ends of the opposing first leg members, and the lower ends of the second and third leg members are spaced farther apart than are the upper ends of the second and third leg members.